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Harrisonburg Offers Second Annual Tax Help Program

Harrisonburg, VA – To help City residents with tax preparations, the Office of the Commissioner of Revenue and volunteers from James Madison University (JMU) have collaborated to provide free tax help for those who need it through the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program (VITA).

Three graduate students from JMU, who are studying accounting, went through training and received their certification through the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). They received assistance from their professor, Dr. Nancy Nichols, who is a professor in the College of Business and the MSA Program Director. These individuals are available and prepared to help with tax preparations for members of this community.

This is the second year Harrisonburg has participated in the VITA program that offers tax help to people making under \$51,000 per year. VITA programs are coordinated throughout the country and established by the IRS.

This year, with the help from faculty and students at James Madison University, the program has increased the number of clients it can serve from last year, providing more of Harrisonburg with free tax services. So far this year, 16 individuals have taken advantage of this service.

"We set up the VITA program last year to help local residents prepare their taxes," said Karen Rose, Chief Deputy Commissioner of the Revenue and VITA Program Coordinator. "Members of our staff and the volunteers are incredibly knowledgeable and work hard to make sure we help as many taxpayers as we can to prepare their returns accurately."

Citizens must schedule an appointment by calling 540-432-7704. Remember to bring a photo ID and social security numbers to the appointment.

All taxes must be filed no later than April 15, 2013. Since Virginia is no longer offering paper checks for tax refunds, all residents should keep in mind refunds will be issued through direct deposit or a prepaid debit card (www.tax.virginia.gov/site.cfm?alias=refunddebitcards). To learn more about the VITA program and other services offered by the city visit: www.harrisonburgva.gov/taxes.

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